

TOCH JOURNAL

MAY
1956

NEWS • VIEWS • IDEAS



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Power Conferences

Your attention is drawn to the dates of the two Power Conferences shewn in *Multum in Parvo*, on page 164. The full list will be found on page 91 of the March issue.

"Talbot House to Tower Hill"

Under the above title an anthology of Tubby's writings during the past forty years has been compiled by John Durham and is now in the press. Publication is expected shortly and will be in two bindings; paper-board 6s. 0d. and cloth 9s. 0d.

"Curious History"

The Curious History of Toc H Women's Association (The First Ten Years) by A. B. S. Macfie will be published this month, price 8s. 6d. (plus 9d. postage).

Acknowledgements

We are indebted to the Editor of *Over the Bridge* for permission to reprint the article on page 154; to *Working Opinion* for the picture on page 158; to W. Camm & Son, Mablethorpe, for the one on page 165 and to Harry Heller for the photograph of the Old House Working Party on page 168.

Advertisements

Enquiries from Advertisers with products of interest to our readers are most welcome. Rates and details will be readily supplied. Readers can greatly help by letting us know of manufacturers prepared to give consideration to advertising their products in the JOURNAL.

Ourselves

The **Toc H Journal** is published monthly, eleven times a year. The April issue is a double number and there is no August number. A subscription can commence with any issue and costs only 6s. for a complete year.

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

TOC H JOURNAL

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Letters and articles are welcomed and are printed as individual points of view, and are not necessarily those of the Movement

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Cover Picture:

School children listening to a lecture on road safety, one of a series arranged by members of Woking Branch.

Photograph reproduced by courtesy of "Woking Opinion"

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The Parables Today

by HUBERT SECRETAN

There are many today for whom the language of religion is as remote as a foreign tongue. In the Parables they will find men just like us, in their strength and in their weakness; here they will find the timeless personal qualities that constitute the riches of human relations in any age and which point the seeker to the nature of the Kingdom of God.

NOTHING HERE WRITTEN makes pretence to be scholarly or theologically profound. It all began with a bit of thinking about the parables of Jesus, what they were for and how He used them. Could it be that, in this age as in His, they offer just the needed approach to the many who, despite a longing for a closer acquaintance with Someone they find uniquely attractive, remain outside the Church because they and it are not on the same wavelength? "This multitude which knoweth not the law are accursed." So cried the learned men of His day when their officers failed to arrest Him and tendered as an excuse, "Never man spake like this man". Yet it was just to such ordinary folk, with no special learning, that Our Lord seems to have addressed his parables and, they, we are told, heard him gladly.

Such thought led naturally to a re-reading of the parables as a whole. This is a study which anyone can make for himself by using the tabulation of them in one of those simple and informative "Aids to the study of the Bible" often bound up with Bibles, on which so much humble and patient labour has been spent.

Striking stories

The first point that stands out is that while, as we should expect, knowing that Matthew and Luke both used Mark, seven parables are common to all three gospels, there are eleven that occur in Matthew only and no less than seventeen in Luke only. These last include some of the most familiar, like the stories of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. Since it is generally recognised that Matthew and Luke drew on a written account (now lost) of the sayings of Jesus, it is at first sight surprising that only three parables, apart from those also found in Mark, are recorded in both gospels. But

is it surprising? A great deal of the early teaching about Our Lord must have been passed on by word of mouth and what more likely to have caught imagination and memory than these striking stories? What it does suggest, to the plain man at any rate, is that the parables we have are the survivors, doubtless the most forceful ones, of a much larger number that Christ used in the course of His open ministry.

There are no parables in John. That is not surprising either, if we consider the nature of his gospel, the fruit of deep reflection throughout a long and devoted life, upon the inner meaning of the life and teaching of a beloved Master. For such an outlook the time for parables had gone by. John was concerned with a deeper understanding of the Word of God than they could convey. To this we shall have to return.

One facet

Trying to let one's imagination flow round Our Lord's use of parables one must be careful to remember that they are only one facet of His teaching. He seems to have used them rather as one would use a sharp pick to break hard and often stony ground. Story-telling is traditional in the East, and Christ evidently used a medium familiar to the minds of His hearers first to arrest their attention and then to pinpoint something characteristic of God's kingdom or of the qualities required of its citizens. Often, no doubt, the response would go no deeper than appreciation of a good tale. But sometimes, either at once or later when the story, so easy to remember, was chewed over again, the deeper meaning would come home. One thinks of him surrounded by simple practical people, not the kind of people who understand learned language or find it easy to enunciate general principles. He wants to make them see a point. So He tells His story. "There, it's just like that." And you either see it or you don't, for the hearer's response is essential. "*He that hath ears to hear*" is no idle warning.

The point of the parable is always simple, vivid, clear-cut. The story is just its vehicle and we confuse ourselves and the issue if, in our sophisticated way, we try to make a coherent system out of parts of the story that are only incidental. In the Labourers in the Vineyard, for example, the point driven home is the attitude of mind of the owner, and we darken the whole picture if we try to base on it discussion of the ethics of a minimum wage. Similarly in the story of Dives

and Lazarus. it is the portraits of the two men that we are meant to see, and not to start an argument about whether heaven and hell are within hailing distance.

It is sometimes suggested that the parables make little appeal today because the society in which they are set is so different. Differences in status are taken to be part of the natural order and the economy is a simple rural one of tillage, pasture and vineyard. That is surely nonsense. If one could imagine another group of parables set in an atmosphere of electronics, space travel and atomic fission, these might indeed be unintelligible to dwellers in a simpler society. But all of us, however science-conditioned we are, retain some acquaintance with the processes of nature and the simple things of life. In the group of parables that begin "the Kingdom of Heaven is like" the pictures of seed and leaven and treasure and net (and what a wealth of illustration is here) are all clear and intelligible enough. In the much larger group which picture so vividly the character of citizenship in the Kingdom and the kind of society it must be, which of us will say that the personal qualities and human relations they depict are remote from our experience? Words and deeds, duty to one's fellows and to God, love and charity, wholeheartedness and responsibility, villainy and indifference, here they all are in living pictures in which we cannot but see our own strength and weakness. The men in the parables are men like us.

Way of approach

For us, as for the original hearers, the appeal is always to the ordinary man's intuitive sense of right and wrong, good and evil. Once that intuition is stirred the way is open for the deeper and more difficult teaching that gives it all meaning: the disclosure of the nature of God Himself, as we have it in the great discourses in the gospel of John. If the parables are a way of approach suited to our condition, that is by no means to say, as people sometimes do, that we can be content to take them as our guide and not look further. It is true of the parables, as Bishop Gore once wrote of the Sermon on the Mount, that "that collection of Our Lord's discourses is arresting, challenging, startling, sifting. But it obviously leaves the mystery (secret) of the Kingdom undisclosed." He goes on to say that the deeper teaching, summarily indicated in the first three gospels and much more fully set out in the fourth, "has been the basis of the life of

the Christian Church. Without it the teaching of Jesus would be a forecourt with nothing behind it."

What makes it particularly valuable to look afresh at the parables in this twentieth century is that we do so badly need a forecourt. There are many for whom today the language of religion is as remote as a foreign tongue. Yet there is a longing in their hearts to find the truth. Is it possible that in all humility we can turn again to these stories (some at least of them familiar enough as stories) to pinpoint for ourselves and others the characteristics of the Kingdom? Can we provoke the response. "Yes, I see. If it's like that it's good. But how can it be like that?" So the thirst is awakened. And he who thirsts has set his feet on the road that leads to Him who alone can satisfy the thirst of men's hearts.

BRANCH BANNERS

XXI HARBORNE

Contributed by F. GIBBS



THE BANNER of Harborne Branch is perhaps unique in Toc H for it bears no relation to Harborne, Birmingham.

Subsequent to the 1914/1918 war the City of Birmingham adopted the City of Albert, France, and permission was sought from the then Mayor of this latter town for us to adopt the Coat of Arms of Albert on our banner, which permission was readily granted.

Albert was formerly known as Ancre and in August 1617 King Louis XIII made a present of the Marquisate of Ancre to his favourite, Albert-de-Lignes. The letters Patent ordered in June, 1620, that the City of Ancre should henceforward be called the City of Albert. The translation of the motto *vis mea ferrum* is "My strength is of iron".

Teaching Road Safety

by W. T. CROOK

Secretary, Toc H Woking Branch

SOME SIX MONTHS AGO one of our members felt he would like to have his son pass the Cycling Proficiency Test as set out by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. On making an enquiry at the Police Station he found that they were prepared to give the test but that no local scheme existed for the testing of schoolchildren. Our Branch decided that something could be done about this and so with the co-operation of the Superintendent of Police, who has always been a good friend of the Branch, we started a training for local schoolchildren between the ages of nine and thirteen.



Taking the Test in the School playground

Every week for nearly an hour we give instruction to about forty-five children on the Highway Code. Signals, Signs, Starting and Stopping. Crossroad and Kerb Drill and members of the local Cyclists Touring Club instruct on the care and maintenance of the cycle and correct riding position. Each class has four talks and this is followed by a test at the end of the month on a Saturday afternoon when the School

playground is made to represent a main road, with cross-roads and traffic lights. The tests are under the control of Sgt. Cox of Woking Police. Children who qualify receive a Cycling Proficiency Certificate and are entitled to wear a badge which they can buy for a shilling.

At the first Test all of the forty-two competitors passed, and certificates and badges were presented by the Superintendent of Police at one of the local cinemas.

Some information on the cost may be of interest, and in this respect we have found that co-operation with the National Cyclists Union produced a most interesting booklet entitled *Your Bicycle*, free of charge. Another leaflet is issued to all children at a cost of 2d. per head and every child issued with a Cycling Proficiency Certificate adds another 6d. for the registration. For our weekly classes we are permitted use of the school classrooms and we find the time of 6.30 p.m. quite convenient to the children and ourselves.

We all feel that we have a corporate job which is really worthwhile and which should continue for many years to come without any serious 'drain' on our manpower since our rota of 'teachers' only demands each member to teach at the most once a fortnight.

Mark Wardens Conference

by ALAN LORD

ONE of the chief glories of our Toc H Marks is that each has its own special characteristics—and usually its own special characters! But although each Mark has its own individuality, because each is a unique mixture of personalities, all the Marks have the same purpose and to some extent the same problems and it was with the object of sharing their common experience that wardens and members of the Central Houses Committee met in Conference under the Chairmanship of L. Prideaux-Brune at Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, on April 7 and 8.

The conference was divided into four two-hour sessions each of which began with a short talk, the remainder of the time being spent in discussion. On Saturday, Alan Lord opened the first discussion on the purpose and function of

a Mark in relation to its Marksmen, its "neighbours" and the Movement. Later in the evening Alec Churcher, Schools Secretary of Toc H gave an admirable talk on how best—and how not—to influence young people with the spirit and purpose of Toc H.

On Sunday morning, after a joyful Service which he conducted, Padre Bob Knight of Southern Area gave his view of the strategic nature of the Marks' job within the Movement. In the afternoon D. Ingle Gotch, Deputy Chairman of the C.H.C., handled the subject of finance with a degree of finesse which would fit him for high political office!

It is, of course, quite impossible to sum up briefly the impressions gained at a conference of this kind. But without doubt one's chief recollections are of the kindly hospitality of our Quaker hosts and of the sense of united Christian purpose which was the dominant theme of the discussion. There can have been few who did not leave the conference more certain than when they came of the purpose of the Marks in the work of Toc H or more fitted to ensure that that purpose is fulfilled.



Members of Blaenau Ffestiniog Branch, which has just celebrated its third birthday and holds all meetings in the Welsh language.

YOUNGER MEN

by NORMAN ASHFORD

Here is the substance of a speech given at a Conference Session held during the Central Council's Week-end last month.

THE QUESTION OF YOUTH in Toc H has perhaps received more attention than any other topic at all levels of the Movement during the past few years, and rightly so. Without a steady influx of younger men the Movement will become moribund within quite a short space of time. The accent on this question is brought into more prominence by the two-year absence from civilian life of the National Serviceman but I think, in common with many others, that our approach to the problem has been more theoretical than practical. We must do something positive if we are to survive. 'Youth' is a comparative term and if we are thinking solely in terms of the sixteen to twenty-one year-olds we are, I think, making a mistake. I would suggest that we cast the net rather wider and fish for the ten-year period from sixteen to twenty-six or even up to the thirties.

Our opportunity

Youth is essentially a time of adventure and therein lies our opportunity; we consider Toc H to be an adventure in Christian living but are we living up to that ideal? Give a chap a job and he will find the time and the energy to do it and be prepared to join in the fellowship in the Branch as well as on the job. The man you know best is the man you work with. We most probably look like a lot of old fogeys at Branch meetings, but let the youngsters see us with our sleeves rolled up 'mucking in' on the job with them and they will soon have a different slant on Toc H and on us, as we shall on them. A weekly (spelt with an 'a' only too often) meeting with a cup of Toc H tea is not enough. If we have lost our sense of adventure we may as well draw up the best armchair and put our feet on the mantelpiece for all the good we are likely to do. We must prove that we can still *do* as well as *say*; then not only shall we be doing what we set out to do when we joined, we shall become younger in spirit ourselves and better able to attract all sorts and conditions of men into the Family to "leap with joy".

I speak from experience of a Branch with fifteen members over fifty years of age—and fifteen members under twenty-five, the remainder being fairly evenly spaced over the years between. The signatures of twenty of the present members appear on the original application for group status of twenty-three years ago. Many of the members are with us because they have been co-opted to help with corporate jobs and this applies particularly to the younger element. We have had our failures in men and in jobs and as a Branch but we are convinced that we are on the right road. We are perhaps fortunate that we are a small community, the population is around 7,000 including 500 or so patients of an extension to the Royal Western Counties Hospital Mental Department, which we visit with our show twice each year; we take pride in the fact that we have not yet lost a member there although we must admit that there have been one or two near misses!

'On the job'

We meet each other therefore fairly frequently during the daily round but as a Branch we are not content to hold our weekly meeting and leave it at that, we are great believers in the corporate job and in enjoying ourselves together. For four years before the war and for ten years since we have produced an annual Minstrel Show—written, produced and staged by members, with which we tour hospitals and give charity shows from November to March each winter averaging at least once a week. With rehearsals, this means that we meet at least twice a week for the greater part of the year at Branch meetings and 'on the job'. We enjoy our Tuesday night Branch meeting but we do not expect our young men to sit and listen to a speaker every week. We throw the programme to them fairly frequently and have had some of our most enjoyable (and unorthodox) meetings when the responsibility has been theirs. A motor coach—or a dressing room—can become a Toc H meeting place quite easily, not that the discussion is often suitable for the Third Programme, but discussions started under such conditions often have their value.

Community links

We run an annual Ball and a couple of Socials each year, we have a rota for duty at the hospital four times a week, we have recently built an Old Folks' Centre and each year we

give the old folks a Summer Outing and a New Year Party, these in co-operation with the Women's Association Branch. We have men in almost all that goes on in the town, three members are on the local council—two of them under forty, three are on the Old Folks Committee, two of the young men help with the local youth clubs and the Cubmaster is one of our members. In addition we have two members who are Deacons of the Congregational Church, one on the Parochial Church Council, two Trustees of the Methodist Church and our Pilot is a Sgt. Major in the Salvation Army. We always have at least one of the 'under twenty' group on the Branch Executive and on the sub-committees which we appoint to deal with special jobs like the Annual Ball, etc. We play too, our challenge to the local Cricket Club was accepted—we beat them—was it because six of our members play for the First Eleven?—the youngsters challenged us to a Bowls match, the result of that does not bear thinking about! We have problems of course, one is to persuade the youngsters not to say 'Sir', although the roof is frequently in danger of collapse when in the heat of discussion someone comes out with something like "Don't be so b—— silly—Sir."

Essential contact

This sounds like a catalogue of all the virtues but it is not intended to be, we have our sticky times as all units do. Our policy is to keep busy and to keep our eyes open always for new blood. Contact with the Youth organisations is essential, but we think that the lad we have to look for is the one who does not belong—the odd man out; we have something to offer that is different and exciting. Thus we find that the youth of today is all right—give him Toc H and he is more than all right, he it is who will keep us on our toes. We shall have our arguments and differences of opinion and of method, sometimes we older men will be in the wrong but if we believe in Toc H and its purpose, if we are prepared to be uncomfortable and hard put to it to find time to do the things that we ought to be doing, we can show that in Toc H we have something fine and worth working for. Let us resolve to do this and to show it and share it, we shall not then be worried about the future of our Movement "scarce begun and great only in so far as God is in the midst of it."

MULTUM || MUCH IN PARVO || IN LITTLE

☛ TUBBY is now much better but, acting under doctor's orders, he is away until the end of this month.

☛ TUBBY has been appointed to be an Honorary Chaplain to the Bishop of London.

☛ BARKIS is grateful for the many letters of sympathy he received on the death of his wife. He is now visiting his son in Kenya and hopes to see something of Toc H in Uganda.

☛ The Annual Meeting of the CENTRAL COUNCIL was held in London on April 21-22. A report of the proceedings will be published in the June JOURNAL.

☛ At that meeting the Council confirmed the Central Executive's appointment of Padre R. J. (JIM) DAVIES, formerly of the Beds. and Herts. Area, as Administrative Padre.

☛ This appointment will release Padre HERBERT LEGGATE to devote himself to training and liaison work in the Areas as "Field Commissioner".

☛ Padre NORMAN MOTLEY now becomes Joint London Padre with Padre SAM EVANS (South and South-East London Areas) and will be doing pastoral work chiefly in London north of the Thames and also in other parts of the country.

☛ ALEC CHURCHER, Schools and Service Secretary, is abroad on leave of absence until the end of July. Correspondence should be addressed to MRS. P. HARMSWORTH at Headquarters or to the Area Secretary concerned.

☛ All Branches within reach should now send to their Area Secretary the names of their three representatives selected to attend the POWER CONFERENCES on July 7-8 at CAERLEON, Newport, Mon., and on July 21-22 at YORK.

☛ Later opportunities to be represented at POWER CONFERENCES are given from September at centres near Manchester, Bognor Regis, Hoddesdon in Herts., Bideford in Devon, Swanwick, Folkestone and in Cumberland and Warwickshire.

☛ Branches' nominations of CENTRAL COUNCILLORS for 1956-58 are due by May 14 and votes by June 28.

☛ FESTIVALS: Toc H Women's Association in London on June 2-3; Lakeland at Kendal. North-Western at Port Sunlight, West Midlands at Lichfield, and Sussex at Uckfield, all on June 9.

☛ TWENTIES CAMP at Langdale, Westmorland, June 23-30.



The Branch Chairman in action on the auctioneer's rostrum, supported by Branch members

MABLETHORPE'S AUCTION SALE

by GEORGE DANIEL

An account of how members in an area which has itself experienced terrible floods rallied to raise practical help for others in a similar plight.

SOON AFTER receiving news of the terrible hurricane 'Janet' disaster in the West Indies, the Chairman of Mablethorpe and Sutton U.D.C., called a meeting of representatives of all the local organisations where it was agreed to raise a sum of £100 towards providing relief. The delegate from Mablethorpe Toc H gave his report to the Branch and, on our Chairman's suggestion, we planned to put out an appeal for anything except jumble to be auctioned in aid of the fund.

Having first delivered leaflets, members toured the area by van and car, mostly in snowy and very cold weather, for a full week collecting from almost every house. By Saturday our meeting-place, which was to be used as the auction room, was stacked with a tremendous assortment of goods ranging

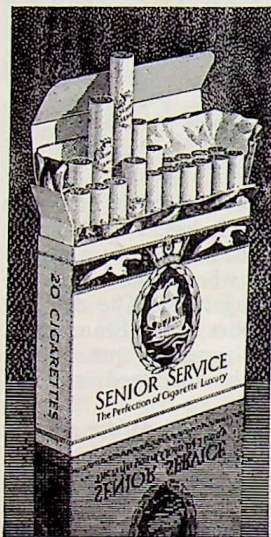
from electric razors to boxes of matches. The doors opened at 2 o'clock and, despite a heavy snowstorm, the room was crowded when Walter Leadbeater, our Chairman, mounted the auctioneer's rostrum prompt at 2.30 p.m.

Steadily the auction continued for the next eight hours, with only one short break for tea, and it was nearly 10.30 p.m. when Walter disposed of the final Lot No. 434. Coupled with donations received in lieu of gifts of goods and the sale of refreshments, the Sale realised a final and very gratifying sum of £177 17s. 9d.

Postscript

Extract from "The Lincolnshire Standard" 25.2.56.

Monday's meeting of the Mablethorpe and Sutton U.D.C., opened with the Chairman's reference to Saturday's Toc H Sale. "This has been a truly remarkable effort," he said, "and I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Branch of Toc H for the way the members have gone out to help. Their efforts have been crowned with success and I feel that all members of the Council will join me in expressing sincere thanks to everyone concerned".



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The Elder Brethren

*At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them*

ARGLES.—Suddenly, on March 27, RONALD MARSHAM ARGLES, aged 75, a member of South Western Area General Members Branch and a former Chairman of Leek Branch. Elected 16.11.'20.

BONELL.—On January 20, ALFRED ARTHUR BONELL, aged 65, a member of Codsall No. 1 Branch. Elected 8.12.'50.

DOWNING.—On February 8, JOHN DOWNING ('Winnie'), aged 78, a member of Chilham Branch. Elected 25.9.'51.

FLETCHER.—On February 2, Captain GARNET PRYCE FLETCHER, aged 71, a member of Southern Area General Members Branch. Elected 20.1.'43.

GANNAWAY.—On February 5, HERBERT GANNAWAY, aged 72, a member of Maidenhead Branch. Elected 6.2.'39.

HARROWBY.—On March 30, the Rt. Hon. JOHN HERBERT DUDLEY RYDER, fifth Earl of Harrowby, aged 91, formerly chairman of the West Midlands Area Executive.

HOPPER.—On February 5, ROBERT EDMUND HOPPER, aged 61, a member of Maidenhead Branch. Elected 21.2.'40.

JAMES.—On March 28, the Rev. JACK JAMES, aged 53, a founder member of St. Just Branch. Elected 5.7.'52.

JENKINS.—On March 10, ERNEST JOSEPH JENKINS, aged 67, a member of Caerphilly Branch. Elected 29.7.'46.

MORRIS.—In January, WILLIAM HENRY MORRIS, aged 72, a member of Welwyn Garden City Branch. Elected 16.10.'53.

POWELL.—On January 23, HARRY POWELL, aged 60, a founder member of New Addington Branch. Elected 25.1.'32.

RAYMOND.—On February 23, HENRY RAYMOND, aged 61, a member of Tavistock Branch. Elected 30.9.'46.

REED.—On March 31, the Rev. LANCELOT GEORGE REED, M.C., Chaplain to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Abadan, 1929-46, aged 75. Elected 12.6.'29.

SCOTT.—On January 5, the Rev. EBENEZER SCOTT, aged 84, a member of Porlock Branch. Elected 7.1.'44.

TEMLETT.—On December 29, RAYMOND VICTOR JOHN TEMLETT, aged 38, a member of Western Area General Members Branch. Elected 14.9.'36.

WARNE.—Suddenly, on April 2, ALFRED WARNE, aged 66, a member of Dyserth Branch. Elected 8.3.'51.

WEBB.—On February 14, DUDLEY F. WEBB, aged 36, a member of Glenfield Branch. Elected 16.9.'55.

WHITE.—Suddenly, on March 12, SYDNEY JOHN WHITE, aged 50, a member of Reigate & Redhill Branch. Elected 8.11.'38.

WICKLEN.—On February 29, GEORGE WICKLEN, aged 61, a member of Stonehouse Branch. Elected 20.6.'35.

EASTER WORKING PARTY

by ELSA PERRIN

London & Home Counties Secretary, Toc H Women's Association

THE CHANNEL was choppy and very cold, but the sun shone from a blue sky and it was a happy little group of members who watched from the rail of the cross-channel boat the twin towers of Ostend Cathedral take shape through the mist. The Working Party was on its way and although the local bus took us on what might be termed "a comprehensive tour of the Belgian Coastal region"

we were still full of the *joie de vivre* when we tumbled out of the bus on to the cobbles of the Market Place in Poperinge.

After a meal and good night's rest we set to work next morning in a businesslike fashion and were soon energetically scraping and polishing, the men tackling the front door and the women the panelling and furniture of the Library. It was all great fun. Living in the House as a family, working as a team, playing together, was stimulating and satisfying. As usual, the help and hospitality of our Belgian friends were unstinting.



'Warmy', 'Tiny' Little, Angele and Sylvain at work on painting the doors of the Old House

The Warden's Room and Gen's Room had already been expertly re-decorated in grey and pink, made possible by the generosity of two English Branches. The great doors have now a pristine whiteness and shine forth in welcome as the visitor makes his way along the narrow street. Three coats of paint

and plenty of hard work have achieved this. The new curtains add dignity and homeliness to the rooms and are now held in position by matching bands. The chairs and tables in the Library reflect the same shade as the panelling and shine with much staining and polishing. The Ladies' Washplace boasts green and white paint and all the necessary fittings, and the photographs and prints on the wall of the Lounge have been re-arranged more artistically.

Amid much hilarity beds, mattresses and pillows were sorted and carried from one floor to another, and the scene at one time was reminiscent of an ancient Laurel-and-Hardy film. Five new spring mattresses and seven pillows have been purchased with funds provided by visitors during the last year, and will soon find their places in the Padre's and Gen's Rooms. This will mean that three rooms will be complete with good beds, mattresses and pillows.

There is still much to do and we need money for beds, mattresses, pillows, net curtains, pots and pans, cushion covers, etc.

The story would not be complete without mention of the Upper Room which has undergone its annual scrubbing and looks clean and fresh. On Easter morning our numbers were increased by two over-night visitors and the Padre and three English people from Ypres. We all enjoyed Holy Communion and afterwards breakfasted together before going our several ways.

It was with regret that we left the house at the end of our stay, and we travelled London-wards with many pleasant memories to keep us company. In fact, one member of the party was so reluctant to leave Poperinge behind him that he brought away his dirty sheets and now has to solve the problem of returning them!

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APATHY OR APPETITE

by PHILIP LINER

A letter in the March Journal prompted these musings which are not necessarily the views of the writer's Branch or District.

I WAS RECENTLY ASKED in front of about fifty Methodist men "Does Toc H serve any useful purpose?" and "Does Toc H bring men to God?" Toc H members will of course, answer 'yes' to the first one as I did, pointing out that if the Movement were a waste of time, they would not be members wasting their precious time. And time is precious, as is personality. Toc H should emphasise its Service angle if only for the reason that a Toc H Branch without Service might as well be six feet under. The small things which call for the use of one's personality should be investigated.

Last Christmas my Branch talked about calling on half-a-dozen old ladies in the vicinity on Christmas morning with a small bunch of flowers. A tiny job but calling for more effort on the part of the individual than all the outings with film units and visits to hospitals. This little job needed the forfeit of precious time on Christmas morning when we all hate to be away from our family circles. And what satisfaction those members would have inwardly derived. *But*—the shame of it—the Branch did not carry out the suggestion. I hope when they read this that they will resolve not to let such ghastly failure overtake them this year. The giving of personality at times when it is most inconvenient is a true and rewarding piece of work we can all attempt in the name of Toc H.

"Does Toc H bring men to God?" Yes, it does—but not nearly enough men and not often enough. There are in Toc H men who have found God through Toc H and have received great strength at His hands. We all too often apologise for our Christian attitude in Toc H. You know the sort of thing. "Can't meet in the Church Hall—nobody will come there" or "Folks won't come if the parson's there". Knowing a goodly mixture of parsons, I admit they may have something there—up to a point—but generally I think this is a sacrilegious attitude to take, particularly when we are out to win men for God. Are we to get men for God under false pretences? Are

we to pretend that Toc H is a snug little society meeting for the sole purpose of hearing about "the love-life of the lesser ant" or to discuss last Saturday's soccer match. That is what some members of Toc H think today—and they might as well belong to the Co-op Old Mens' Rest Hut and Guild.

There used to be a notice in Talbot House in Poperinge, which read "Pessimists Way Out". Would that it could hang in all our meeting rooms alongside "All rank abandon . . ." I have just read a worthwhile little book by Canon Gordon Ireson called *Think Again*, and I commend it heartily. Whilst it does not specifically deal with Toc H problems, it does deal with the problems of personal relationships in modern society, and this surely is where Toc H can do some of its finest work.

Bill Follows his Clue—5

by JOHN DURHAM

This instalment tells how Bill Davidson's trail led him to represent his Branch on a District Team and what happened at the first Team meeting he attended.

GETTING OUR LAMP meant, of course, that the Branch had to be represented on the District Team. To be quite honest we were not terribly thrilled at the prospect. Shortly after becoming a group we had had a not very enthusiastic invitation from the District Secretary saying that if we liked to look in at the meetings of the Team we would, of course, be very welcome. No members of the Team had ever come over to see us. I don't mean that the neighbouring Units hadn't taken an interest in us, but officially the District Team seemed as if it couldn't have cared less whether we lived or died. Lofty had gone over once to a Team meeting, travelling by bus a total of forty miles. The night on which he went over was a filthy one, with pouring rain, and he may have been prejudiced from the start. Anyhow, he told us at the next Branch meeting that he had never been so bored in his life, and that if this had been his first introduction to Toc H he wouldn't have touched it with a barge pole. In spite of that experience he agreed to represent the Branch on

the Team, and I was chosen with him. I suspected that the lot had fallen on me because I had a car. Twenty miles isn't really an awfully long way to travel by bus, but it's the return journey which is such a bind at the end of what may have been a pretty long day. You can't help feeling you want your money's worth if you make the trip. District Teams, I thought, must be much stronger in London and big cities because transport and distances are so much easier.

So it was not with any great zest that I set off in the car to pick up Lofty. Had I got the Agenda with me? I searched in my pockets and eventually found the envelope. The Agenda did not inspire me. It read as follows:—

*"A Meeting of the District Team will be held
at the Canonbury Branch Rooms
on Thursday, July 8th. at 8 p.m.*

Agenda

Minutes of Last Meeting

Arising from Minutes

Branch News

District Finance

Area News

A.O.B.

Part II

To be Arranged."

Well, we would see; but, as I've said, I wasn't thrilled. Perhaps we ought to have gone over more than that once to the Team Meetings, but we seemed to have had enough on our plate with building-up the group.

As I pulled up outside Lofty's house, the door opened and Lofty came out.

"Dead on time," he said. "What punctual little dears we are. Do you know where this place is?"

"Not a clue," I replied. "I've been to Canonbury once or twice, but never to the Branch. I thought you knew."

"Not me. I haven't been there either. I suppose the Secretary thought we knew. Oh, well, it doesn't matter, we've got plenty of time."

"Wasn't the meeting you went to at Canonbury?"

"Oh lor'. no. The Team meets at the different H.Q.'s. Apparently they think doing this spreads the travelling more fairly. I suppose it does, but I bet I'd always forget where the meeting was going to be held if the Agenda didn't turn up."

We reached Canonbury about a quarter-to-eight, and swanned around for a bit. We couldn't see a Toc H sign anywhere, so we decided to try our luck at the Police Station. A friendly Sergeant told us the way, and by five minutes to eight we were at the Branch Room. The door was unlatched, so we pushed it open and went in. No one was there. By five past eight the Secretary arrived, and by a quarter past we got down to business.

The District Team met only every other month, so the Minutes of the last meeting seemed to be concerned with events that were pretty thoroughly dead and buried. Much of them was concerned with the arrangements for a coach to bring people over to our Lamp presentation. I suppose that they had to be read, but everyone looked rather bored during their recital. The only thing that arose from the Minutes was comment on that evening, and it seemed that the general judgement was favourable. Lofty and I had been a bit anxious over this; we breathed a sigh of relief that apparently our first effort at a Guest-night hadn't been a frightful flop.

Branch News consisted mainly in a series of "Well, there's nothing very much to report. Things are going on pretty well. Of course, the summer is always a bit of a slack period." Then, suddenly, the whole thing hotted-up. Canonbury Branch wanted a chap called Tom Jones transferred to the Area General Branch. Apparently the Area Guard and Elections Team always asked for the views of a District Team before they came to a decision. Tom Jones, we gathered, had been a member of Toc H for about fifteen years but had transferred to Canonbury five years ago. He was about sixty, and five months back had had a stroke. He was in bed, and likely to stay there for the rest of his life. The Branch visited him regularly, and recently had come to the decision that as he couldn't any more attend the meetings the best thing to do was to make him a General Member. The Chairman asked what Tom thought about this, and got the reply "We thought we'd mention it to the Team first. We haven't spoken to Tom yet about it."

If silence gives consent, it looked as if the Team were in agreement with Canonbury's suggestion. But Lofty was giving signs of having something on his mind. I've only once seen him lose his temper, and the prelude to it was a shuffling of his feet and a fidgeting of his hands. Both feet and hands

were now performing a little dance. He goes very quiet, does Lofty, when he's angry.

"I'm very new to all this," he said. "and I may have got it all wrong. But what you seem to be saying is this. If Bill here, a member of my Branch, goes ill and is likely to be bed-ridden for the rest of his natural life, you'd expect us to take him off our Roll because he couldn't attend the perishing Branch Meetings. Well, if it was that kind of Branch I don't suppose he'd worry much. The poor devil's been hit for six, and you take damn good care to keep him off the field. Why the hell can't you keep him on the Roll, and make him feel he's still one of your family? You could take the Lamp round to him sometimes on a Branch evening, and let him take Light. You say he's a good chap and been a member for fifteen years. I'm not a pious sort of bloke, but I've known chaps who've done a devil of a lot of good tied to their beds. I don't believe he ought to be made a General Member unless it's absolutely certain he wants this, and even then I think we ought to try to persuade him to stay on the Branch Roll. The whole idea makes me sick."

Lofty's broadside produced nothing but silence for a few seconds, and then one of the Canonbury representatives said, in a rather reproachful tone,

"We didn't mean it like that. What we thought was that if Tom couldn't come to the meetings, he wasn't really part of the Branch. After all, getting together is part of the whole business, isn't it? I mean, you can't have fellowship if you don't meet."

Lofty had no intention of stopping firing.

"Personally," he said, "I wouldn't call it fellowship chucking the chap out because he's ill. And anyhow, while I think the meetings are very important I don't believe they're the whole of Toc H."

The discussion went on for quite a time, and eventually it was decided not to recommend Tom for General Membership and to ask Canonbury Branch to have another think.

District Finance turned out to be a request from the Secretary for further contributions from the Units. Apparently he had run out of money—the last whip round having been nearly a year ago—so we agreed to fork out fifteen shillings each Branch.

The Area Padre had sent an apology, explaining that he had to go to another District Team meeting at the far end of the Area, so we quickly disposed of the item "Area News".

"I'm sorry," said the Chairman, "but there's been a slip-up over Part II, and there isn't one this time. So, if anyone has something for discussion under A.O.B. we've got plenty of time to discuss it."

This was where I had to weigh in.

"I've got something I'd like to mention," I said. "We'd very much like to have your reactions to an idea that was mooted a little while ago by one of our Padres. He'd been in London, and one evening had supper with Tubby. In the course of supper Tubby had said something to the effect that what Toc H needed was something which would catch the imagination of men, some bit of service that was quite —er— special. And then he'd gone on to talk about giving the cornea of one's eye to someone blind. 'Toc H men,' Tubby had said, 'would in future be immediately recognisable by their wearing a black patch over one eye.' Well, our Padre told us about this, and said that he believed there was something to it. Not that we should be expected to give a cornea while we were alive, but that it would be regarded as a natural thing for a Toc H man to give instructions that when he died his sound cornea was to be removed and so be made available for grafting onto someone who was to all intents and purposes blind. That's the idea, and we'd like the Team's reactions."

On the whole the Team's reactions were not unfavourable, and it was agreed that the Reps. should tell their Units about the idea.

By now it was nearly ten o'clock, and as there was no other business we packed up and made for home.

"I wonder why," said Lofty, as we settled ourselves in the car, "I wonder why we didn't have Light or Family Prayers. Do you suppose the Chairman forgot it or that they never have them?"

"I don't know," I replied. "Probably never have them, I should think. You didn't half go off the deep end, didn't you? But you were dead right. What an extraordinary attitude! Or are we completely cock-eyed?"

[Note: If the story of Tom Jones sounds too fantastic, let it be said that such an occurrence has come within my own experience.—J.D.]

To be concluded.

IFAIR CRY

NOTES AND NEWS
FROM DISTANT PARTS

Contributed by GEOFF MARTIN, Overseas Secretary



The children in this picture are at the New Market Home, Singapore, with which the Singapore Branch has a close connection. The occasion is the Chinese New Year Party. The Johnmaster had secured the services of a well known Negro entertainer, described by the Press as "Mr. Billy ('I love children') Banks".

TALBOT MANOR

SOME MONTHS AGO we made a brief reference to the unusual acquisition of a farm by Toc H in Natal. Albert Charles gives a fuller picture of their progress and aspirations in the *March Compass*, from which this slightly garbled extract is taken.

A happy thought on the part of Jack Luke, Natal Area Chairman, has solved the problem of a name for Toc H Natal's venture into the realms of real estate. What was once known vaguely—and misleadingly—as "the farm" is now officially "Talbot Manor".

Those who have seen "the old house" (literally, and with accent on "old") will no doubt and with some justification, consider the title a trifle grandiose. However, no amount of cold water can dampen the enthusiasm of the small band of enthusiasts, which never tires of trailing out thirteen miles each week-end to give all its available energy to the development of Talbot Manor. There is a mood which grows upon one, born of the fellowship which arises from mutual

hard labour and an appreciation of the other fellow's effort which snowballs into an over-riding yearning to get on with the job and an impatience with what seems to be a fantastically slow rate of progress.

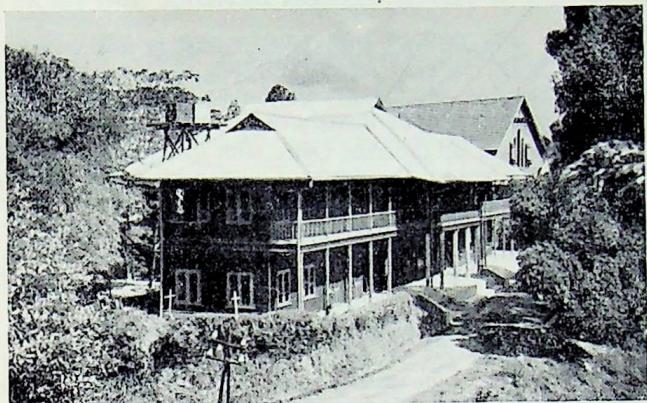
So much for the house. It is surrounded by twenty-five acres of rich, arable land, carpeted mainly with *kikuyu* grass. The persistence and tenacity of this hardy grass is surpassed only by the tenacity of purpose of the men who are optimistic enough to attempt (with no small success) to clear it with hoc and shovel. At the moment we have about half an acre cleared and planted to beans, mealies, peas, carrots, spinach, rhubarb, beetroot, cabbages, lettuce, marrow, cow-peas. Only half an acre? Yes but it has been cleared, dug over, composted, fertilised and is producing.

We are planning a speed-up of the clearing process. Tractor and plough will be hired to deal with the *kikuyu*. The Manor will be self-supporting. Indeed, it will show a profit. It will in due time provide a steady income, which can be devoted to the works of Toc H in one form or another.

But Talbot Manor was not acquired for the purpose of making money, or of conducting farming operations on a grand scale. The profit will come from a sound, proper husbandry of the soil. Soil must be used and, used well, it will yield its own reward. Those who toil there have never lost sight of the main object of the Manor. It is, first and foremost, a Toc H Mark. It should not here be necessary to define a Mark. As far as it can be defined, this has been done elsewhere in Toc H literature. The enthusiastic few who manage the Manor are mindful of the fact that it must be, first, last and always, a Mark.

ALBERT CHARLES.

FULL CIRCLE



The rebuilt school for Chinese and Malay pupils at Sandakan, Borneo, where a teacher is urgently needed to carry on the work of Ken Franklin, of Eastbourne Branch.

In 1950 the Bishop of Borneo (formerly a member of Toc H in Oxford and Ceylon) appealed through the JOURNAL for a schoolmaster to help recreate his Primary-cum-Secondary school in Sandakan. Kenneth Franklin, a member of Eastbourne Branch, answered the appeal and with his family went out to Borneo in the following year. Now, his term of service is finished and he is home again.

The Franklins were warned to expect difficulties, and on arrival they found that the school was little better than a cattle shed, for the Japanese had destroyed the original building.

There were, at that time, two hundred Chinese and Malay pupils and now there are four hundred pupils housed in a completely rebuilt school proudly bearing Eastbourne's motto *meliora sequimur*.

Ken Franklin now, in turn, appeals to other Toc H teachers to come forward to fill his place in Borneo and to carry on the work there, as he is unable to do a second tour abroad. He would welcome enquiries c/o Eastbourne Branch, Longstore Road, Eastbourne.

THOSE RAZOR BLADES

A WELL-KNOWN MEMBER in Yorkshire used to pack all his used safety-razor blades and post them to Mrs. Buggins, 99 Laburnum Grove, Margate. At least that was one address; he thought of a new one each time!

Pity to clutter up the Post Office with undeliverable metal or to run the risk of the dustman cutting his fingers, when there is money in this for the Family Purse. Like all good scrap-metal, there is a market and a constant demand for certain of these blades, if they are slotted, clean and not rusty. Some of them were used recently to prepare special garments for the Antarctic Expedition.

Are you using a cut-throat or growing a beard? If not, provided the blades you use are of the slotted type (Gillette or 7 o'clock), send them to the member of Darlington Branch concerned: Peter L. Cubitt, 35 Dale Road, Darlington, Co. Durham. It's nice to know how to get rid of the darned things for the benefit of a good cause!



FROM ALL PARTS DIRECT from AREAS



SOUTHERN—Two Branches have special celebrations very soon: **Dorchester** their Twenty-first Birthday on Wednesday, May 2, when W. W. ('Bill') Llewellyn will be their chief guest, and **Swanage** their twenty-fifth on Wednesday, June 6, when Padre Herbert Leggate will be theirs.

For two years there has been an annual Quiet Afternoon in **Salisbury** on a Saturday in July. This year an additional afternoon is being arranged in **Winchester** to meet the demands of shop-keeper members who are not free on Saturday.

A new group has started operations at **Parkstone** (Dorset) and the Secretary, S. W. Philpotts, 214 Rossmore Road, Poole, Dorset, will welcome names and addresses of any likely local contacts.

Bob Knight.

EAST ANGLIA—The Lord Mayor of Norwich set in motion the Sound Film Projector which **Eaton Branch** has been able to purchase within four months of launching an appeal, although the members had set themselves two years to raise the funds. The first film show was enjoyed by the young patients in the Jenny Lind Children's Hospital.

Congratulations to **Trimley** on recognition as a Branch once more. The Lamp had previously been handed in as the members were not satisfied with the standard being maintained.

A new group in Norwich, **Pockthorpe**, grows apace and is making its presence felt.

Mid-Norfolk District is busy working on a new idea, a 'Gathering for Toc H Families' at Whissonsett on Whit-Monday. Games and Side-Shows for children of all ages.

Reg Smith.

NOTTS. & DERBY—There is a lunch-hour gathering of members and friends who indulge in extremely lively discussion every Monday from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Albert Hall Institute (Room 5), **Nottingham**. An excellent play was excellently performed by members and probationers of **Bingham Branch** as part of their birthday celebrations recently. A **Nottingham District Garden Party** is to be held in Bingham on June 23. Toc H was represented in the Schoolboys' Own Exhibition in **Derby** in April by a display of notices and literature. **Rowditch Branch** continues to run its invalid club every Tuesday. Congratulations to **Graeme (Derby)** on achieving Branch status. Members of **Kirkby-in-Ashfield Branch** visit old folks in their homes to talk to them and take them a few comforts.

R. L. Wheatley.

BEDS. & HERTS.—Members from all parts of the Area have listened to Bob Purdy's account of his work in Malaya, at meetings held at **Wolverton, St. Albans and Ware**.

With co-operation from the Y.W.C.A., **Watford** presented a play, **Birthmark** which raised £11 towards Toc H development funds.

Sandy Branch have again entertained patients at the county's sanatorium at Moggerhanger.

Frank R. Figg.

SOUTH-WESTERN—Our newest baby in the Area is the group at **Barnstaple**—just beginning to find its feet. The Secretary is Jim Harper, 18 Gould Close, Forches, Barnstaple, Devon, and anyone knowing of possible contacts in or near Barnstaple is asked to let Jim know.

Two new Branches, **Bude** and **Sherborne**, have received their Lamps, both occasions being ones of great rejoicing. Good luck to both in their adventuring.

We have been privileged to have 'Greeno' with us for a short spell, renewing old friendships and making new ones. Together we talked a lot, laughed a lot, and learned a lot, and face the future better for his visit.

Gilbert Francis.

NORTHERN—A new Branch, **North Ormesby**, has now received its Lamp and a new group, **Thornley** has held an inaugural meeting in the Miners' Welfare Hall—temporary contact man: William Bassham, 5 Hartlepoons Street, Thornley, Co. Durham.

A pea and pie supper arranged by **Tyneside District** at **Wallsend** was attended by eighty members and friends including the Mayor and Mayoress of Wallsend.

A football match was organised on Easter Monday by **Grove Hill Branch** and the proceeds shared between the Family Purse and local charities.

Liverton Mines Branch held their re-dedication service in the Methodist Church and followed it with a social evening attended by guests including members of the newly-formed Women's Branch.

An Area Rally is being held in **Durham** on Saturday, July 14. Fuller details later.

C. V. Young.

WESTERN—**Cirencester Branch** collected and despatched, last year over one ton of clothing to the Oxford Famine Relief Fund.

Toc H Bristol Hospitals Broadcasts' Society have enabled over ten thousand patients in local hospitals to hear a complete commentary of the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh's visit to Bristol, when Her Majesty opened the new Bristol Council House, and later the new reservoir at Chew Stoke. In addition to the complete commentary from the time of arrival, patients enjoyed the unique privilege of listening to the only live broadcast of the Queen's speech from the Council House. This was made possible by the co-operation of the Western Region of the B.B.C. and the Municipal authorities.

Keynsham Branch have organised a Special Effort within the Branch whereby each member is pledged to raise £1 for Toc H funds by his own efforts and ingenuity.

Castle Cary Branch at a recent joint Rededication Service, with the Toc H Women's Branch, welcomed as their preacher the new Bishop of Taunton.

W. F. Brooker.

OXFORD & THAMES VALLEY—**Windsor** has re-started as a group, the Secretary is Ron Taylor, 14 Maidenhead Road, Windsor, Berks. Toc H in the **Oxford District** was asked to take part in a Government Inquiry into the Huttred Camps near there. Their part was a modest one, but Toc H rubbed shoulders with members of the Oxford Trades Council and of the political parties with whom they had a common cause. This is a new idea of Toc H to some, but one which we will have, inevitably and increasingly, to become used to in future developments.

O. M. Wilkinson.

SUSSEX—Do you know of any likely men who would link up with those who have already started trying to get Toc H going in Hove? If so please tell Harry Wittingham, 35 Elm Road, Portslade. A member of **East Grinstead** has recently started a Company of the Boys Brigade. **Bognor Regis** have held their twenty-first Birthday celebrations. It was a great occasion with John Callf as Guest Speaker. The Power Conference at Reigate was a time of great inspiration for the ninety-two members from London, Surrey, Sussex and Kent. Much good will come from this.

Cyril A. Cattell.

YORKSHIRE—A new start has been made at **Bailiff Bridge** and the Secretary, Denis Squire, 17 Mayfield Grove, **Bailiff Bridge**, Brighouse, Yorkshire, would be glad to have names and addresses of men likely to be interested.

J. W. Maddock.

MANCHESTER—Malaya has been much in our thoughts in recent days as that Ambassador extraordinary, Bob Purdy, has toured our Area. We are more than ever aware of our shortcomings and are now convinced that the smallest unit (could we have a smaller unit than one man-size B.P.?) is large enough for the greatest task. We were fortunate too, in catching a glimpse of Jack Shaw whom we welcomed as our guide, philosopher and friend at the end of April. The International Help for Children Association is hoping to send children to Denmark as well as receiving them from Germany this year.

W. L. Taylor.

EAST MIDLANDS—A new group has been recognised at **Dogs-thorpe** in the Peterborough District. The Secretary is Frank Buzzard 11 Grimshaw Road, Peterborough, and meetings are held on Thursdays at the Scout Hall, St. Paul's Road, Peterborough, at 7.45 p.m.

A **Northampton** District Toc H Week was held during April and included Guest Nights with 'Ches' and Jim Davies, shop window displays, a Mannequin Parade, a traditional Jazz Session, a distinguished panel dealt with Any Questions, a Whist Drive and a Concert.

In **Loughborough** arrangements are well in hand for the Annual Carnival Band Contest on May 12 when a record turn out is expected.

Colin Stevenson.

KENT—**Southborough** have already started looking ahead to Christmas. They have agreed to be responsible for all local arrangements for providing Christmas cheer for those in need and organising collections. **Broadstairs & St. Peters** are likely to be in the position to purchase their own H.Q. shortly owing to the generosity of a friend. Members from **Medway** District have had their first evening of door-knocking on the new estate at **Walderslade**. They have a meeting room already and hope to have a group under way shortly. If you have any contacts that way, let Ron Terry, 54 High Street, Chatham, know.

Cyril A. Cattell.

MARK VII—Daffodils were gathered by members of the **Newent, Gloucester** and **Cheltenham** Branches on Sunday April 15, and sent up to London the following day. **Mark VII** then arranged for their distribution to thirteen hospitals in addition to the two nursing homes on either side of us here in Fitzroy Square. The flowers weighed about 8 cwt. and we have had some most appreciative letters from the various Matrons.

Michael Harris.

LANGDALE CAMP

We would like more volunteers from active folk for the camp which will take place at the Langdale Estate, near Ambleside from June 23 to 30, 1956. We sleep in dormitories, spend the days in the open air on the hills and in the countryside and enjoy our holiday together. The cost is £3 17s. 6d. per person per week, plus about 12s. 6d. for those teas taken on the road, so that it is not an expensive affair. Applications as early as possible, together with a booking fee of £1 15s. 0d. to Iain Fraser, 4 Coles Drive, Arnside, via Carnforth, Lancs.



OPEN HUSTINGS

The Editor welcomes letters on all matters concerning Toc H. For reasons of space the right is reserved to shorten letters submitted, and every effort is made to print a representative selection from those received.

Fixed Time for 'Light'?

I heartily endorse the suggestion made in the last issue that we should take the Ceremony of Light throughout the British Isles at 9 p.m. whatever the meeting night, in fact, whenever possible and members of Toc H are present, at the same hour. 'Let us remember Them'.

CHAS. F. T. BASDEN.

Southchurch, Essex.

IN ANOTHER splendid Movement (of which I am a member) a ceremony takes place exactly on the stroke of nine p.m. in all Lodges that are in session on that particular night. Nothing is allowed to interfere with this ceremony, which has priority over any business that is being conducted that night. The business can be continued afterwards, but the nine o'clock ceremony must be observed. Thus there is unison in all Lodges, and because

of this the ceremony becomes more solemn and impressive. There is something added to it, and the feeling of comradeship and love of our fellow men takes on a newer and finer meaning at that precise moment, when we cease to be a separate Lodge with a separate entity, but become members in a Brotherhood of one grand whole, and know we are with them in spirit no matter where they may be.

ALBERT FLETCHER

Saltburn-by-Sea.

Toc H in Civic Life

THE Mayor Elect of this Borough (Cornwall's oldest Borough) is Councillor E. J. Goodsell who is a member of the Saltash Branch. He will be elected Mayor of the Borough on the 24th May. This means that both the Mayor and the Town Clerk are Toc H members, and in addition there is on the Council

another member of Toc H, and a former Mayor of the Borough (Miss W. M. Fearnside) still serves on the Council and is a member of the Women's Association Central Executive.

I wonder how many other Councils can beat that record for Toc H membership? Another member of the Council has just resigned his membership of Toc H for purely personal reasons.

A. GORDON BELLINGHAM
Saltash, Cornwall.

World Government

MR. WALLACE, in his letter in the *Open Hustings* of March 1956, has suggested three ways of obtaining World Government. The first two, by war or dictatorship, we can dismiss as he does without further comment, but the third by "democratic voting" he also dismisses without much argument. He does not even mention the word Federation as a means by which World Government and Self-Determination can exist together.

Federation is not a magical word that can solve the problem in one moment, but it contains some of the ingredients of a solution. World Government is the ultimate aim of Federalists; the process however must be a gradual one probably by way of regional federations, that will in no way affect national governments except to ensure that international differences be decided in an International Court of Justice. There lies the logical solution of the problem of war and peace. No plans of disarmament can ever be effective by unilateral agreement, but, if Russia and China knew that propaganda and intrigue were powerless against a solid front, the cold war would cease to attract them.

OPEN HUSTINGS

Russia's obvious aim today is to find the weak points in NATO unity. If NATO became a federation there would be no weak points.

Federal Union is a non-party movement in this country and anyone wishing to obtain further information about its activities may do so by writing to The Secretary, Federal Union, 20 Buckingham Street, London, W.C.2. My first contact with the Movement came from a Toc H member in 1945.

H. GWYNNE NEWMAN
Edinburgh.

Meeting Places

IN reply to Sidney E. Kendrick of Gravesend, writing in the *March JOURNAL*, at Sandy the name and address of the Branch Secretary is put on a notice board along with other organisations in the Post Office. So that anyone can walk in and find out if needs be where he or she can contact the local Branch of Toc H. It may also help the postman when delivering letters, addressed to Toc H with only the name of the town given. I often get letters like that.

R. L. ROBINSON.
Sandy, Beds.

Power Conference

ON behalf of the Barkingside contingent, I have been asked to express our gratitude to all those whose efforts resulted in the success of the first Power Conference at Grange Farm, Chigwell.

In the words of one of those present, it was a grand opportunity to enable "the ordinary bods who have to sweat it out in the ranks" to listen to the inspiration which stemmed from John Callf, Alec Churcher and others, and then come back at them in

group discussion or up-in-the-corner huddle. To many of us younger members, the Staff lost the remoteness of characters on the printed page and became men with ideas and ideals, men whose vision warmed the walls of the glass palace in which we shivered for the week-end.

A grand idea, Toc H. More power to your elbow.

JOHN BECK.

Barkingside, Essex.

District Teams

PAGE VII of the Annual Report on membership makes rather disturbing reading for the true Toc H members. The trouble today seems to be that we have too many lukewarm members, men who like to wear their Toc H badge but who find any excuse to be absent from meetings or do Toc H jobs.

The situation offers both a challenge and an opportunity to the enthusiastic member to do something about it. Many Branches have only a small membership, say nine or ten members with an average attendance of six or seven at the weekly meeting. The chaps who do attend regularly, although keen, are apt to get despondent and disheartened, and sometimes find it difficult to make ends meet and do jobs of service they would like to do.

Although the individual member can do much to remedy this state of affairs, personally I think the District Team have a grand opportunity of showing their worth. If the District Team is to be the best Toc H Branch, whose purpose is to instruct and inspire, then surely the selection of representatives and officers should be given the most serious consideration. Many men are put on the team because they have a car or similar transport, irrespective of their suitability. Given a team

of enthusiastic members, led by a lively Chairman and Secretary, they can do much to encourage small Branches and increase membership. How many teams arrange a District rededication service to which all Toc H members in the district are invited? This is an inspiring experience, and what about training nights or training days? These seem to have faded out in many districts. Let them be revived. Another suggestion is for Districts to arrange summer evening outings to points of interest in their district; these will help to keep chaps in touch with each other.

Many more suggestions will no doubt present themselves but I say to all Districts—get cracking, create a lively interest in Toc H, make the members feel that they matter. Then we shall again recapture that enthusiasm and inspiration which has made the Movement great.

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